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S E R M O N

P R E A C H ' D at

ELY-HOUSE Chapel

In *HOLBOURN*;

On *Thursday June 7, 1716.*

Being the D A Y of

Publick Thanksgiving,

F O R

The Blessing of God upon His M A J E S T Y ' S
Counsels and Arms, in Suppressing the late
Unnatural R E B E L L I O N .

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
WILLIAM ^{*Fleetwood*} Lord Bishop of Ely. *K*

The Sixth Edition.

L O N D O N :

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ST. MARK'S

CHURCH

IN WASHINGTON

On Thursday June 7, 1860

Public Thanksgiving

FOR

The Slaves of God and Man

and for the

PSALM CVII. Verse 2.

Let them give Thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the hand of the Enemy.

IT is not certain *what* Deliverance it was that occasion'd the *Psalmist* to exhort the People to Thanksgiving so earnestly and frequently, as he does in this *Psalm*: It is enough that there was Reason for so doing, and therefore the Words of the Text are general, and as applicable to any other People, as to the *Jews*—*Let them give thanks*, whosoever they are, and wheresoever they live, *whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the hand of the Enemy.*

The Redemption from any Evil, that God hath wrought for a Nation, and his Deliverance of it from the Hand of the Enemy, is certainly a most sufficient Ground and Reason for Thanksgiving. I will first consider this in general, and then apply it in particular.

First, The Redemption and Deliverance of a Nation, from the Hand of the Enemy, is a most reasonable and just Occasion of Thanksgiving to God. The Evils Men escape, are justly reckon'd as so many Mercies received, and Mercies received are the only proper Subjects of Thanksgiving; and therefore 'tis most reasonable and fit, *That they should give Thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the hand of the Enemy, i. e. from all the Evils and*

Calamities of War. Whatever can make Life desirable, is hazarded in War; and the best End that Men propose by War, is to incline and force the Adversary to Reason and Justice, to good Terms and a Desire of Peace, by the Sense of their present Sufferings, and by the Fears of greater. So that the very End of War is doing Mischief to Mankind, in order to bring them to Reason: And therefore whatever Mischiefs a Man can suffer, with respect to the free Exercise of his Religion, the Serving God, in Time, and Place, and decent Order; and with respect to his Estate and Fortune, the Enjoying the Fruits of his Labour, or the Inheritance of his Ancestors; or with respect to the Life and Safety of himself and Friends: Whatever Mischiefs any one can suffer, with respect to any of these particulars, he may expect them reasonably from War, there is nothing so likely to bring them on him, as the Sword of War: *That* is the Executioner of God's severest Vengeance, with respect to the Community. It spreads more Mischief, carries more Misfortunes, than any Instrument of God's Anger. And therefore, to be freed from *the Hand of the Enemy*, is to be freed from almost all the Evils that a Man can undergo, and therefore such Deliverance well deserves a Thanksgiving.

Now such Deliverance is said to be *of God*, not only when he assists in a miraculous and visible Manner, and when the Means are apparently Divine, or disproportioned to the End they work; but when there appears nothing of God immediately in it, when nothing extraordinary or unusual happens, but second Causes work their natural Effects, and Strength, and Force, and Numbers, Advantage of Ground, Plenty of Provision, Wind, and Sun, produce their usual Fruits and Consequences. God works Deliverances by *these*, as certainly as by his Miracles. And whosoever reads the *Psalms* of David, and knows his History withall, will see all his great Victories,

Victories, and his Escapes, attributed to God's Hand, in a Manner marvellous and extraordinary ; when yet they were brought about, as Victories and great Deliverances are now a-days, by great Armies and good Conduct, by Force and Subtlety, by Strength and Stratagem. Thus in *Psalm xviii. The Lord is my Rock and my Fortrefs, and Deliverer, the God of my Strength, in him will I trust : He is my Shield, and the Horn of my Salvation, my high Tower and my Refuge, my Saviour, thou savest me from violence : I will call upon the Lord who is worthy to be praised ; so shall I be saved from mine Enemies. The sorrows of Hell compassed me about, the snares of Death prevented me : In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried unto my God, and he did hear my Voice : Then the Earth shook and trembled, the Foundations of Heaven shook and were moved, because he was wrath. He bowed the Heavens also and came down, and it was dark under his Feet ; he rode upon the Cherubim, and came flying upon the Wings of the Wind. The Lord thundered from Heaven, and the most High uttered his Voice ; he sent out Arrows and scattered them, Lightning and discomfited them : The Channels of the Sea appeared, the foundations of the World were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his displeasure. He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many Waters. He delivered me from my strongest Enemy, and from them that hated me, because they were too mighty for me. God is my Strength and Power, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like Harts feet, and setteth me up on high. He teacheth my Hands to war, so that mine Arm shall break even a bow of steel. It is God that avengeth me, and bringeth me forth from mine Enemies ; He is the Tower of Salvation to his King, and sheweth Mercy to his Anointed for evermore. Without remembering David's History, one would imagin that Heaven and Earth were moved on his behalf, and that the Course of Nature had been overthrown ; and that his Life was covered by continual Miracles, from all Attempts, secret and open. And yet the Title of this*

Psalms tells us, it was a *Song of Thanksgiving*, that *David* sang in the Day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his Enemies, and from the hand of *Saul*: And by his History we know that no Miracle was ever wrought in his Favour, nothing Supernatural or Surprising done in all his Life, but what great Courage and great Conduct, with the Blessing of God, might well have compassed. But from hence, we may learn these few things, 1. That *the History* must still be consulted in explaining the *Psalms*. 2. That the *Jewish* Expression, and indeed the Expression of all the People that dwell *Easternly*, is full of Pomp and Amplification, of Fancy and Hyperbole, and is not therefore to be taken in its large and literal Sense, but in a Sober and restrained one. And 3. That whatever God is said, in all these Passages, to do, with so much Majesty and Might, with so great Power and Wonder, is done by human Means, and human Instruments, and in an ordinary and natural Course, by human Strength and cunning, by Vigilance, Activity, by finding and by taking hold of Opportunities, by common Armies, by Horse and Foot, by Bows and Arrows, Swords and Spears, Shields and other Instruments of Death and of Defence. All that is here attributed to God, is done by these, in the Hands of Men of Courage and Experience, which is his Arm and Sword. And therefore the Deliverances that all Men else have had from Enemies or other Evils, both may and ought to be ascribed to God, as well as these; his Hand is still the same, his Power not shortned; and therefore our Gratitude is full as due as theirs, for all the Mercies we receive; it is from Him alone, that all our Blessings come.

Nor is it only the Deliverance from an Enemies Army, that *David* ascribes to God, but his Deliverances from any Evils or Mischiefs design'd against himself in private. Thus when *Saul* privately purposed his Death, and it was discovered to him by *Jonathan*; and

and when he also sent Messengers to *David's* House to watch him, and to slay him in the Morning, and it was discovered and defeated by his Daughter *Michal*, *David's* Wife, who told him— *If thou savest not thy Life, thou shalt be slain to morrow*,— and helped to convey him safe away. He gives the Praise and Glory of these Deliverances to God alone, tho' the Discoveries were made by People from whom such Kindnesses might reasonably have been expected, a Wife, and a generous Friend and Brother-in-law. And yet, upon this Occasion he composed the 59th Psalm— *God is my Defence, the God of Mercy shall prevent me, God shall let me see my Desire upon mine Enemies. Unto thee, O my Strength, will I sing, for God is my Defence, and my most merciful God.* And therefore 'tis but reasonable to ascribe to God, Deliverances of any sort, by any Means and Instruments lawful and honest. It was God that delivered *David* by the Messengers and Informations of *Jonathan* and *Michal*, from being privately Assassinated, as well as from falling into the Hands of his Open Enemies, by his own extraordinary Courage and Conduct, and by the Affections of his People, and the Valour of his Soldiers ; and therefore Praise and Thanks are to be ascribed and given to God, as certainly when he employs the least, and the most inconsiderable Instruments, as when he uses greater. All these things appear so evident and reasonable, that it were but loss of Time to prove them. There is no Scruple or Objection to this Exhortation of the Psalmist ; it is assented to, as soon as asked, that *They should give Thanks whom the Lord hath redeemed, and delivered from the hand of the Enemy* : We have therefore only to Yee, in the Application, what Reason we have now to give God Thanks, by considering from what Evils we have been redeemed, and from what Enemies we have been delivered. The Evils we have been

been delivered from, are all the Miseries and Calamities which constantly attend a Civil and Intestine War. These we must have undergone, as long as any Enemies would have appeared against the King, altho' his Arms had been at last Successful: But had the Rebels prevailed, the Evils then must have been numberless and endless; the King must have been Deposed and Murthered, and so must all his Family that had not Fled; the Consequence of this must have been, that no Protestant Prince must ever have ruled in this Nation again. The Consequence of that must necessarily be, the Establishing a Succession of Popish Princes for ever; and what less will follow from thence, than the rooting out the Protestant Religion in these Kingdoms for ever, and settling Popery for ever, in its stead? And what will then become in time of all our Laws and boasted Liberties?

These are not Consequences, which the *Proclamation*, for Observance of this Day, has drawn, and which I repeat from it only for Amplification's sake, and to beget Astonishment and Dread in Peoples Hearts, without Cause; but they are such as make themselves, such as are Natural and Unavoidable; such as *must* follow, if free Agents may act freely, and Natural Causes produce their Natural Effects: Such as are only possible *not to happen*, if God by a wonderful Power, intervene not to hinder them, which because we have no Reason to expect, we have no Reason to suppose. And they are such as you your selves shall be Judges of. Had the King's Forces been defeated either in *England* or *Scotland*, you are not to imagine that there had been an End of the War; more Forces had been raised and sent to their Assistance. A King and Parliament agreeing, are not so soon Vanquished. I believe we have not one Instance in all our History, of a King overcome by his Rival Adversary, whose Cause and Title the Parlia-

Parliament did heartily espouse, as is the present Case; and therefore all their Legislative Power, their Interest, and their Wealth, would certainly have been exerted, in raising and maintaining Armies for supporting and establishing the present Government, from time to time as there should be Occasion.

Examples are only as so many Snares, to slight and inconsiderate People, who only view them on the Side they like: Because a *Revolution* in favour of the Protestant Religion, and of the Laws and Liberties of the Nation was so easily brought about, therefore the hot and thoughtless Heads of the Conspirators, imagined such another might be brought about, with as much Ease, if they could work the People into Discontents and Disaffection to the Government, and a Seditious Disposition, by idle Tales, and groundless Calumnies, as ridiculous as they are false; and by revival of that senseless Outcry of *the Church's Danger*, of which they were never yet able to make one tolerable Proof, to the Conviction of any sober, thoughtful, and observing Man.

By these Means, however, they have made shift to lead Captive abundance of silly, noisy, and outrageous Women, and to seduce great numbers of decayed, idle, and disorderly Men, whose Ignorance makes them credulous, and disposes them to swallow any Stories that are told them, tho' never so improbable; and whose necessitous Condition keeps them in readiness for Tumult, and to follow the Directions of such as secretly abet and favour the designed *Change*, in hopes of some Encouragement for the present, and finding their Account in it hereafter. These are the People for the most part, that, had the Rebels prevail'd a little at first, would probably have risen in divers quarters of the Kingdom, and joined them as soon as they could conveniently; and might thereby have made their Army *numerous*. To these we may also add,
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without doubt, a number of Men of better Quality, some of unmeasurable Ambition, some discontented and disappointed of their Hopes, others of broken Fortunes deep in Debt, and overwhelm'd with Mortgage, others obnoxious to the Government, and despairing of Forgiveness. A Body thus composed and formed, must needs be able to do an infinite deal of Mischief, to desolate and ravage many Countries, to burn and pillage many Towns and single Houses, to rob, abuse, to wound and murder many thousand People, innocent and inoffensive in themselves, but become *Enemies* by adhering to the Government, and not assisting the Rebellion. These things they must have been forced to do, within a few Weeks after they first enter'd on this Warfare ; for when the little Money of their own had been spent, and the little which their Leaders would have been able to supply them with, was also gone, what must they have done, but either Starved, or fallen to Plunder where-ever they came ? They had no Fund, no Taxes to depend upon, nor Credit for Subsistence, nor Regular Pay to look for ; Those are all with the Government, and without them no Army can continue together for any length of Time, without depriving every Body in their reach of all they have, and destroying all before them. Thus their Numbers would have made them *able*, and their Necessities made them *willing*, to bring upon the Country all the Calamities and Miseries of Civil War, how little soever of all these Cruelties and Mischiefs, they may say, they intended when first they entered on it. Things will have their natural and easy Consequences, whatever People may intend ; and the best Intentions in the World will excuse no Man for the evil Consequences, if they are natural and easy ones, and such as are usually expected. But after all, will such a mad, disjointed, unprovided Rout as this, be
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able to hold out against the Wisdom, and the Strength, the Wealth and Interest of the Nation, united in the King and Parliament, who have all Power entirely in their Hands, and who can raise what Armies, and what Taxes for their Pay, they please? I would not exaggerate things in the least degree, nor say what the meanest People may not comprehend and think reasonable to believe. The Rebels might, upon a little Success at first, have increased in Number, and might have killed many thousands of the King's faithful Subjects, both in the Field, and out of it, and have undone many thousands more in their Goods and Fortune. All these Evils were prevented, by the Blessing of God upon the King's Arms and Councils, suppressing so soon the Seeds of the Rebellion; all those Lives that have been saved, all those Estates that have been preserved from this Destruction, are Matter of Thanksgiving: We who are faithful to the King, could not but have lamented the Slaughter, or the Ruin of so many of our Friends and Fellow-Subjects. Nor would the Enemies of the King have had less Cause to mourn than We, for certainly his Armies would have made as dreadful a Havock of the Rebels and their Favourers and Abettors; Whoever considers the Strength, the Courage, and Experience, of old, approved, and Regular Forces, well Officer'd, well Provided for, and well Paid, cannot but think they would have sold their Lives exceedingly dear, and would have taken Ample Vengeance on the Kings Enemies and their own, for all the Deaths, the Losses, and the Abuses of their Friends. All these Evils are also prevented, by the so speedy Suppression of this Rebellion: And therefore here is Matter of Thanksgiving even for the greatest Enemies the King has, whether Openly, or Secretly such; they must have lost as many Friends, as there had been

Rebels destroyed and kill'd. The marvellous Compassion, the strange and hitherto unpracticed Charity of publick Prayers and Tears, bestowed upon the few State-Criminals that have fallen of late by the Hand of Law and Justice, this new and unusual Tendernefs I say, shewn rather for their Sufferings than their Sins, by such as approve their Cause, would incline one to hope, that they would joyn with us, as they have Reason, in Thanksgiving to God, for putting so quick an end to this Rebellion, in which so many of their Husbands, Children, Fathers, Brothers, Kindred and Friends, might very probably have perished; *the Sword*, as *David* saith, *devoureth one as well as another*, and the loss, and sufferings of their Friends must needs have been considerably great. And all good Men, who would unquestionably have lamented the Ruin of so many Families, on either Side, will certainly agree in thanking God, for the happy Accidents, that, by his Blessing, have prevented so much Mischiefe, and the Death of so many Fellow-Subjects, Men and Christians, whether Friends or Enemies to the present Establishment. It is not easy for an unexperienced Heart to conceive, much less for the Tongue to expresse, the Desolations, Miseries, and Calamities of a Civil War. And therefore the preventing all these Evils, is certainly the Matter of a serious and sincere Thanksgiving to Almighty God: That it is indeed so, I have hitherto shewed you, upon supposition, that the King's Arms, might (as I think they would) have been Victorious and Successful at the last. But because the Issues of War are very uncertain, and abundance of little Accidents may intervene, which wise Men cannot easily foresee, nor, consequently, be prepared against, which yet may strangely change the Fortune of the Day, against all Reason, Expectation, and the Appearances of Things,

Things, and because as the Race is not always to the Swift, so is not the Battle always to the Strong, but Time and Chance happeneth to them all--- because I say, of these Uncertainties, let us suppose the Rebels had prevailed, and they had been victorious in the Field, and see, what must have been the natural Consequences of this Success, that we may the better see, whether the preventing these Consequences, be truly Matter of Thanksgiving, which is the End of our Assembling here this Day.

The first natural Consequence of the Rebels entire Success, must have been the Death of the King, and the Destruction of the whole Royal Family, if they had fallen into their Hands. Without this, all other Advantages would have signified but little; *this* is the only wanted and desired Success of the Rebellion: Put but this precious Life, and Family, into their Power, and they will want no more, the rest will follow of Course. This is so manifest a Truth, that it can want no Proof. Not one who took the Sword, but must have aim'd at it, and intended this: Not one who stay'd at Home, and wish'd Success to the Rebellion, but must have wish'd for this Destruction of the King, and of his House, unless they were so senseless as to fight for, and to wish for an Event and End, without intending either the necessary Means of compassing that End, or the necessary and unavoidable Consequences of such an Issue and Event. Who can pretend to fight against the King, without intending to Dethrone Him, and to place his Rival in his Seat? And who can wish Success to such an Attempt, without intending what will naturally follow upon that Success? 'Tis just possible to abstract such things in one's Thought, and to separate them one from the other; but 'tis hardly possible to reason one's self into a Belief that such and such things may come to pass

pass, without their natural Consequences. And therefore, they who secretly wished well to this Rebellion, must needs have wished the natural Fruits of such Success, the Death and Ruin of the King, and of his Family. And would not this be a very strange Return for a People to make to a Prince, whom they called to the Throne, and placed him on it with great Joy, and have seen him sit thereon for near two Years, so Inoffensively with regard to our Laws at Home, so Usefully with respect to our Trade Abroad, and with so much Honour with regard to the Princes of the World, that one would think the Mouth of Calumny itself should have been shut.

There is something so particular in this King's coming to the Throne, that it will deserve to be remember'd and consider'd by every one of you; for no King ever yet came in the like manner. He came not in by the Sword, or any Pretence of Conquest, as *William the First* did; nor by briguing with the Bishops and Great Men, as King *Stephen* did; nor was he called to it by the Nobility and Commonalty of the Realm, to correct and reform the Abuses of the State, and supply the Place of such as were Depos'd for Mal-administration, or had left the Kingdom, as were *Edward III. Henry IV. Henry VII.* and the late King *William* of ever Honoured Memory. nor did he come by what they call *Hereditary Right*, as *Henry II. Edward IV.* and King *James I.* did. But the Nation of its own accord, neither moved by any Fear of present Danger, nor by Gratitude for any Benefits or Service past; awed by no Army, either near or distant; bribed by no Favours, promised or bestowed; but free, at ease, and in a Time of Peace, the Nation, I say, in these Circumstances, did of its own accord, most voluntarily offer to, and settle the Crown upon the House of *Hanover*, the Princess *Sophia*

Sophia being the next of Kin, that was a Protestant, Grand-daughter to King *James the First*, in pursuance of a former Act of Parliament which excluded all Papists. In this manner, was the Succession settled on the House, of which the King was Heir and Head : In this manner, and without his seeking, was he call'd to the Throne, by all the Nation, King and Parliament ; and also afterwards by *Queen* and Parliament, if that will please some People better. So that if it be lawful for a whole Nation to secure its Religion, Laws, and Property, from utter Ruin and Subversion, by excluding Papists from the Throne, and lawful for them to bestow their Government where they believe those valuable Blessings will be best secured, there cannot be a better Title in the World than what the present King has. It is the Gift of a whole Nation to him, unask'd for and unsought by him ; and there were fourteen or fifteen-Years betwixt the *Settlement* and its taking Place. So that it was not a rash and sudden Thing, but done with all Deliberation, and there was time enough to see if it were well done. This is the Title that is by all Means to be Defeated, this is the Prince that is to be Dethroned and Murthered. This is the Family that is to fly, or be destroy'd. The Nation must unsay what they formerly said with one Voice ; they must undo what they formerly did, in the most solemn and deliberate Manner ; they must break the Promises they voluntarily made, they must unswear the Oaths they have often Sworn : And all this they must do without any Provocation or Offence on his Part, nay after many Benefits received from his good Government. And would not this have raised the Credit and the Honour of the Nation with the World Abroad, as well as have secur'd it at Home ? But in good Earnest, would it not have compleated both our Infamy and Ruin ? Such a Proceeding with our
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King and with his Family, as must have been the Consequence of the Rebels Success, would have made us the Hatred and the Scorn of all the Nations, with whom we have any thing to do. They saw us not long since, basely and wickedly forsake our Allies, and with another sort of Baseness court our Enemies, and give them all the Advantages that God had put into our Hands, by a long and prosperous War; and now they would see us giving up our Religion, and our Liberties and Laws, by parting with the King and with his Family, whom we had chosen and pitch'd upon, for no other Reason but for the Preservation of that Religion, and the Securing of those Laws and Liberties. Were this a Nation to be loved or feared, trusted or dealt withall? Is all their Zeal for Protestantism, all their Outcries against Popery, all their Love of Liberty, and Exclamations against Arbitrary Power, come to this? Who would regard so false, so foolish, and so changeable a People? Who, when Oppress'd, cry loud for a Deliverance, and when they have obtain'd it, slight it and forget it; who dread the Enemy to Day, provide against him To-morrow, and throw away their Fears and Arms the next Day after.

This Nation had been frequently and strongly Allarmed with the Fears of Popery in the Reign of King *Charles II.* who liv'd a secret, and dy'd a profess'd Papist. It saw it enter like an armed Man in the Reign of King *James II.* and being first frighten'd as it were out of its Wits, and then into its Wits again, it join'd the Prince of *Orange*, made a *Revolution*, declared the People's Rights, and placed the Crown upon the Prince and Princess's Heads. with certain Limitations; and in the *Session* following, disabled any Papist for the future, from being King or Queen of these Kingdoms for ever after; *having found it* (as they express it) *utterly inconsistent with the Safety and the*
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Welfare of it, for this Protestant Kingdom to be Govern'd by a Popish Prince. And again, lest these Limitations of the Succession should determine, as indeed they did, with the late King and the late Queen dying without Children, the King and Parliament made farther Provision for the Succession of the Crown in the Protestant Line, *for the Happiness of the Nation and the Security of our Religion*, and fix'd it to the House of *Hanover*, continuing *Protestant*. And indeed it was absolutely necessary so to do, for there are no Protestants of that Royal Line of *Stuart* in the World, but what are of that House. This made me say, that the utter Subversion of the Protestant Religion in these Kingdoms, must be, in time, a natural and unavoidable Consequence of the Destruction of this House : After which, succeeds an endless Train of Popish Princes. *First*, the Person that pretends to disturb our Government at present ; *next* the Dutches of *Savoy*, a Lady growing into Years ; then her Son, the Prince of *Piedmont*, fourteen Years of Age, but very weakly and infirm ; after them, by the same Hereditary Right, the *present King of France* ; if these should fail, the three Children of the late Queen of *Spain* claim by the same Right, and twenty more that are in view, if it were worth the while to reckon them. This is the goodly Prospect that the Church of *England* has of Princes, that are to be its Nursing Fathers, Heads, and Governours, whenever we shall lose, by War or Treachery, the present KING and Royal Family ! Under which of all these Popish Princes, is the Protestant Religion like to live and flourish in these Kingdoms ? Which of them all, will not, must not, by his Principles, think himself obliged to destroy it, as soon as he is able ? I make no question but Popish Princes are, in themselves, as tender and good natur'd, as wise and considerate, and understand their Interest, as well as any
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Protestants whatever ; and where their Superstition is not concern'd, they give good Proofs that they are so : But wherever *That* comes in their way, they neither can, nor must do as they otherwise would. Their sanguinary Zeal is too strong for their good Nature and Humanity, too strong for Reason, and even an Over-match for their apparent Interest : There is no trusting them : They may promise what they will, but they cannot perform what they will ; their Consciences are in another Man's keeping : Whether they shall Swear or no, is in their own Power, but it is not in their Power, whether they shall keep those Oaths or no, if *Herefy* be concern'd. There they may seek for Absolution from their Oaths, and there they may obtain it. No Oath can bind to Sin, that is very certain with all Men ; but to favour and preserve the Protestant Religion, when there is Power and Opportunjty to destroy it, is certainly with them a mortal Sin ; the Consequence is plain, it is to be destroy'd when that Time comes ; no Oath must hinder it. But Princes do not always Act up to their Principles, nor to the Obligations their Religion lays them under : Very true. Look into History then, and see how it has been in Fact. And if they can produce but one single Instance of a Popish Prince, in all the World, who did not, as soon as he had Power and Opportunity, subvert the Protestant Religion, and do his best to root it out of his Dominions, we will then be content to dismiss our troublesome Apprehensions, and lay aside all Fears of such an Issue and Event. It would be a strange thing, methinks, for a Nation to venture its Religion, Safety, and Happiness, upon the Word, the Promise, or the most solemn Oath of a Man, whose *Principles* will permit him to break that Oath, as soon as he can securely do it ; whose *Interest* it may be to break it ; whose *Conscience* bids him break it, and

and who thinks he shall please G O D, and do his Duty in breaking it. This Man, notwithstanding all these Encouragements to break it, may yet keep this Oath, if he will : But certainly it is too great a Risk for a Nation to run ; and yet this Nation of ours may run this Risk, if we can find one Instance, one Example, of a Popish Prince, who made and kept such Oath inviolable, when he had Power and Opportunity of breaking it.

Were I in any other Country of the World, but this, I need not to have insisted half so long upon a Point so plain as this is, that a Popish Prince is inconsistent with the Happiness and Safety of a Protestant People ; and that let him lay himself under what Ties, Obligations, and Oaths he will, they will not hold him, when he has Power and Opportunity of breaking through them. For the Papists abroad know it, by Principles, that *Herefy* (and so they call the Protestant Religion) is not to be suffered where they can hinder it : And all the Protestants abroad know it by woful Experience. But here in *England*, within these five or six Years last past, we are put to prove every thing, even that the Sun shines at Noon-day, if it make against Popery ; and after proving it, can hardly be believed, if it make against Them or their Friends, by any Consequence. The People of *England* can believe whatever they will, if it be against the Government, tho' never so ridiculous, unlikely and absurd ; but nothing against their certain Enemies who are both secretly and openly attempting their Destruction, and making them themselves the Tools and Instruments of their own Ruin ; tho' this is plain in Reason, and evident by Observation and Experience, and true in Fact ; *i. e.* they can be brought to believe, that a Popish Prince may both permit and protect a Protestant Nation, in the free Exercise of their Religion, when it is in his Power to

subvert it and destroy it. This, I say, is against all Reason, and all Fact, against all Observation, and all the Experience of the World. And therefore if there be any thing good and valuable in the Protestant Religion, or any thing evil and mischievous in the Popish one, we have Reason to thank God for the Preservation of the one, and for our Deliverance from the other, *i. e.* for our Success against the Rebels, who, had they prevailed, must have subverted and destroy'd the one, and settled the other in its Place; whatever ignorant, mad, besotted People may believe, or be taught to say, by those who manage them.

Our Laws and Civil Liberties must also, in a little Time, have run the same Fortune with our Religion, had the Rebels prevailed. It is not the Climate, Air, or Soil of a Country only, that makes a People happy; but the Laws, the Liberties, and Privileges they enjoy, the Security that People have, to possess in Ease and Quiet, the Labours of their Hands, the Fruits of their own Industry, or the Inheritance of their Fathers and Relations, without being subject to the Pillage and Oppression of their Insolent and Arbitrary great Neighbours, or to the exorbitant Demands of their own lawless Princes. It is upon these Accounts that any Country, but most especially our own, is a valuable and desirable Habitation, whatever other Inconveniencies it may lie under, with respect to inclement Airs, or to inconstant Seasons: Every Body abroad admires, and envies us the Happiness of our Constitution; but this and all the good Things that attend it, we must have parted with, had we been thoroughly subdued by our Enemies. Popery can never thrive under Liberty; nor can a Conquer'd Nation expect to have its old Laws left them: The Thousands and ten Thousands, that must and would have been destroy'd, in Defence of their King and Constitution, would have made it a Matter easy enough

enough for the Victors to have changed the Laws entirely ; and who indeed should oppose them ? It would be absolutely necessary to the Security of themselves and of their *New Choice* ; the present Laws are all against them, and therefore they would be against the present Laws. And who, as I said, should hinder them ? The People that could and would, are supposed to be subdued, the rest are Slaves by Principle, and think they have Scripture for it. Laws that restrain a Prince, from doing what he will without Controul, are unrighteous Laws, and null in themselves ; *Where the Word of a King is, there is Power, and who may say to him what dost thou ?* It would be almost Pity that these People should not wear the Chains they seem to court, and are indeed so worthy of, if honest People could escape them. These are the Evils we have been delivered from, by the Success it pleased God to crown the Arms and Counsels of the King with, in so soon suppressing the Rebellion. These are the natural, usual, and expected Consequences of such a War as this, had it gone on. They have not indeed, by God's good Providence, happened to us, and so we cannot be so sensibly affected with them, as we should, had they come in view, and threatned us a little nearer. But in a religious Consideration of things, the Mercy is the greater, by how much sooner the Evil was prevented, which would naturally and certainly have followed. Our King is not deposed or slain, our Army is not routed, our Friends are not distressed or ruined : Our Religion is not changed, nor our Laws and Liberties subverted. But had the Rebels gain'd the Day, these things, according to human reckoning, must and would have come to pass. The preventing them is therefore a most reasonable Ground and Subject of Thanksgiving to God. *Let them, then, give thanks, whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the Hand of the Enemy.* And I doubt not, but such as can con- sider

der Matters thoroughly, and who are seriously affected with Religion, who have any Honour and Esteem for a Prince and Family endued with all the Qualities that are proper to make a Nation happy, and who have any true Concern for the Welfare and Prosperity of their Country, both will and do most seriously return their Thanks to God, for this Deliverance. As for the rest, it is not looked for at their Hands, they would be Hypocrites, and so much wickedder than they are, by joining with us. They who have openly assisted the Rebels, they who have secretly encouraged and abetted them, with Money, Counsel, or Provisions, or other useful Favours; they who have wish'd and pray'd for their Success, and they who have lamented their Defeat and Disappointment; They who have fill'd the Streets with terrible Out-cries upon the Cruelty of the Government for Executing a few of their Friends condemn'd by Law, but without any Pity or Concern at all for more than three times the Number of the King's faithful Subjects, who lost their Lives in the reducing them; they who express their Compassion on one side only, and care not what befalls the other—All these People ought not, as 'tis likely they will not, join in a Thanksgiving, for what has disconcerted all their Projects, and defeated all their reasonable Hopes, and instead of the Sweetness of Conquest and Revenge, has left them nothing but Rage and Despair. These People are some of the very *Enemies* we are deliver'd from; not indeed from their Malice, but from the Effects of it: The King's Enemies are not only they, who appear against him in the Field, but they who sit at home and strengthen their Hands, by the Virulence of their Tongues, by their reviling of the King and Royal Family, by their inventing, feeding and spreading Calumnies and Slanders, by saying any thing of themselves, and believing to appearance, whatever is said by

by others, tho' never so improbable, if it will contribute to the rendring them either Odious or Contemptible. These are the People that deal with the Name, and Honour of one of the Wisest, Best, and greatest Princes in the World, as they would not deal with the Name and Reputation of a Neighbour, were he of any Worth, Substance, or Credit. Nor durst they treat their Equals or Inferiors as they treat the Royal Family, Respected, Honoured, and Beloved, by all the World besides. These People make us Scandalous abroad, shew us not only void of Reason, good Sense and Understanding, not knowing when we are well, or what we would have, Choosing and Refusing, Desiring and Rejecting all in a Breath; but void of all good Nature also, and of all good Breeding, and of every thing else that becomes a Civil and Polite People. There has been, as I observ'd before, a very strange Change in the World's Opinion of us; five or six Years ago, we were the Glory of all Nations, our Friendship and Alliance was courted by every one, our Enmity was dreaded. We have been since their Scorn and Hissing, and Aversion; They despise us for our Inconstancy, and hate us for our Perfidy and Falshood. They deal with us now, as People do with one another, whom they must by necessity deal with, and not out of Choice, with great Coldness, Caution, and all manner of Reserve, no Trust or Confidence, no Frankness, or Dependance on our Truth and Honour. The King was the only Prince, who was capable of retrieving our lost Credit, and re-establishing our Reputation; His Probity, his Justice, Prudence, Firmness of Mind, and Steady Conduct, are such as States and Princes abroad, can trust to, and depend upon; and by a late most useful and most necessary *Act*, the Ground of their Confidence and Trust, is now most happily enlarged; they

they can now depend upon both King and Parliament. And by these Means, if we be not wanting to our selves, we are in the way of becoming again a happy, flourishing, and Honourable People. But these domestick Enemies of His and Ours, are every day destroying, or endeavouring to destroy our Credit, blasting our Hopes, dividing us at Home, and rendring us Suspected abroad.

The Success which it has pleased God to give the King, and which occasions our Assembling here at this Time, is such, as has driven His and the Nation's Enemies, as far back as the Place from whence they first set out, they are in a manner to begin their War anew, and must accordingly make the like necessary Dispositions, and Preparations for it. They must revive the old Calumnies, and must add some new ones to them. They must retain again, in Pay, or Promise, or Encouragement, the common Beggars in the Streets, the poor decayed Traders, the vicious Vagrants, the profligate Libertines, and all the Prostitutes of the Town: These must again be listed into their Service, and have their Lessons of Slander and Reviling repeated to them; to these must be added some of the better Fashion, but not much better Breeding; of better Fortune, but not much better Judgment and Discretion; of more Virtue, but not less Virulence, Rudeness, and Outrage. These are the People who are to join in forming, and in spreading all Reports and Stories that may tend to keep alive, and to renew the Ferment of the People, to irritate exasperate, and inflame them more and more against the King and Ministry, *i. e.* against their own Ease, Security, and Happiness. These are the Means and Methods they have hitherto used, to bring about their mischievous Designs, and these they are still to continue using, till they can find another Opportunity of trying to put them in

in Execution: And therefore, as we may expect to hear of all these Scandals, again and again, so we may be the better provided against them, and know what Credit they and their Authors shall deserve. No doubt but we shall hear, that the Church is again in Danger; do not believe it till you see or hear some good Proof of it; suffer not your selves to be carried away with Noise and Outcries only; call for some Evidence that may convince a reasonable Man. I have the more Ill-will to this unreasonable Calumny, because it is so groundless and so mischievous, because it covers so many villanous Designs, and cheats so many innocent, well-meaning People. I have lived my self in and about this City, six or seven and twenty Years, and been as diligent and careful an Observer how things went, with relation to the Church, as I could; and was as much concerned in its Welfare as another; and yet I Solemnly profess, that neither in King *William* and Queen *Mary's* joint Reign, nor in that excellent King's Reign when alone, nor in that of the late Queen, nor in that of His present Majesty, have I been ever able to observe or see, that the Court or Government had any formed Design to hurt or oppress the Church, either in point of Doctrine, Discipline, Ceremony, Privilege, or Profit. It is in possession of all the Laws that were first made for its Establishment; it has obtained in almost every King's Reign, new Laws for its Confirmation, Security and Strength: It has obtained whatever it has asked, even to prevent some of its Jealousies and Fears. But still it has its Enemies; no doubt of it; it is in Danger still, and always was, and always will be, to the World's end; but in no more nor other Danger, than every National Church throughout the World is, always was, and always will be; from the wicked Men of no Religion, from the Wicked-

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ness of many who profess the true Religion, and from all the evil Passions, Corruptions and bad Principles of the Men that compose the Body of it. Wicked Men of good Abilities, will always be employed in all Governments; the Saints did never yet govern the Earth, nor ever will. They are the Men of Judgment, Languages, Dexterity and Skill, that know the World abroad, and all its Interests, and that thoroughly understand Mankind, that ever were employed, and ever must be used by States and Princes, whether they be Virtuous or Religious, or no; *that* is their own Concern, and they must look to it. Princes and States, if they will be secure, must have regard to such Abilities and Qualities, as are proper for their Service, and would, no question of it, be very glad to have them also Virtuous and Religious; but they must often be content without the latter, if they find the former. In Countries where the *Clergy* themselves are *Ministers of State* and execute all the *great Offices* of the Country, why even there, there is little or no Regard had in the chusing them, to their Superior Learning, Virtue, and Religion, Austere Behaviour, and a Holy Life, but to other Qualities, mention'd before, even such and the same as recommend *Lay-men* to States and Princes, for their Ministers: And they do not think the Church is any ways endangered by Vicious Ministers, if they be otherwise qualified, by Faithfulness, by Diligence, and Application to their proper Businesses. I do not mean hereby to yield so far to the Reigning Calumny, as to suppose the present Ministry to be a Vicious one, beyond what has been before, for I am as sure of the contrary as one can be of any such Matter. But I would say, that supposing it were so, yet is the Church in no Danger for that; which yet helps much to make the Outcry greater, and more mischievous.

I should not make an End to Day, if I must say, what I could say with great Reason, against this false and scandalous Calumny *of the Churches being in Danger*. But I will content my self at present with making a short Observation or two upon this Article. The *First* shall be, That not a Papist in all the Kingdom, that opens his Mouth at all on these Occasions, but opens it in joining with this Cry, that *the Church is in Danger*. He is as much concern'd to have this thing believed, as the most sincere Churchman himself. They do not equivocate in this Matter, and mean by Church *their own Church, but the Church of England*, which they would have all Men believe to be in Danger. And what is the Bottom of all this? Is it from pure Affection to the Church of *England*, that they unite in this Cry? Are they indeed concern'd and touch'd with Grief, to think we are so nigh to Ruin? And would they in earnest help to save us from it? Certainly the Matter is not so, but plainly otherwise. They have a greater End to serve in it. They join in the Cry to make the greater Noise, to gain more Credit to it, to increase the Number of the Disaffected, to make the Populace more enraged and violent, in order to dispose them better to Tumult and Sedition, and lastly to Rebellion. 'Tis for the same Reason, that all the Enemies of the Government besides join in this Cry, and use their utmost Art and Industry, to gain more People to believe it, they add thereby Numbers and Strength to their Cause, which may be useful upon Occasion.

The other Observation I will make under this Head shall be—That the Cry of the Churches Danger ceased intirely for the three or four last Years of the late Queen, when a new Set of Men were employ'd in the Ministry, some of the greatest of which are now actually

in the Service of the *Pretender*, and others vehemently suspected to have been in the same Interest. Under these Peoples Administration, the Church was safe, it seems, and we were no farther allarm'd with any Apprehension of its Danger; the Cry and their Fears ended together. Strange Fortune! That the Church should be only safe in the Hands of those Men, who had brought the State to the very brink of Ruin! I leave these two Observations of the Cry of the Church's Danger to be seriously consider'd: And only desire, that People would be so reasonable, as never to listen to, or believe such an outrageous Slander against so truly good and Sincere a Prince, and those whom he intrusts with his Affairs, without such Proof and Evidence as are convincing, plain, and undeniable. He comes to Church himself, and his Behaviour there is handsom, decent, serious and exemplary; He has given his Oath, his Promise, and Assurance for Protection and all Favour to it; and whatever others have done to him, he has in no particular, either falsified his Word, gone from his Promise, or broken his Oath.

I have not Time to speak to the other Slanders which you have heard so often, and which you will certainly hear again; you may rank them in the same Class, for Truth and Probability, with that which I have mentioned: And I only desire you to take the same Course with them, *i. e.* to give them no more Credit than they deserve, by the Proof and Evidence they shall carry along with them. See with your own Eyes, hear with your own Ears, and trust your own Senses, think what is reasonable and probable, and judge indifferently of Matters; and if the People of *England* will do their Duty, I dare answer
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for it, that every Day the KING lives, they will have more and more Reason to bless GOD for bringing him to the Throne, and to pray that he may long sit thereon ; and be succeeded (in his good Time) by a Race of Virtuous and Religious Protestant Princes, as long as We shall be a Kingdom of Protestants, that is, I hope, For Ever.

F I N I S.

W. M. A.

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